

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congressman John Olver announced that federal funding was awarded to provide permanent supportive housing for 245 homeless veterans in Massachusetts. In addition, seven full-time Master of Social Work case managers will be employed statewide to provide supportive services and case management to eligible homeless veterans.

The funds are part of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (HUD-VASH), which will provide \$75 million for permanent, supportive housing for an estimated 10,000 homeless veterans nationwide. The assistance comes in the form of Section 8 Housing Vouchers which allow participants to rent privately owned housing.

"Homelessness among veterans has always been a serious problem, and now, with veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, we are seeing a new generation of homeless vets," Congressman John Olver said. "These veterans have done what they have been asked to do. They have served their country bravely and are now are in need of assistance. We must do all we can to help those who have sacrificed for us."

In 2001, HUD-VASH was officially authorized, but no funding was requested by the President or appropriated by Congress for the program. The program remained unfunded until this year, when Congressman Olver, Chairman of the Appropriations Committee on Transportation and Housing, wrote \$75 million for VASH into the FY08 Appropriations Bill. This funding is the first and only dedicated federal program to provide housing specifically for homeless vets.

According to HUD, Public Housing Authorities (PHA) in Boston will receive funding to assist 105 veterans, while the PHAs in Northampton and Bedford will each receive funding to assist 70 veterans. HUD allocated the vouchers to local public housing agencies across the country based on a variety of factors, including the number of reported homeless veterans and the proximity of a local VA Medical Center with the capacity to provide case management. The PHAs will coordinate with the VA medical centers to serve veterans in need in the three cities, as well as the surrounding areas.

Olver Announces Permanent Housing for 245 Massachusetts Homeless Veterans

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